

SET THE DATES!
You won't want to miss
Marion's Celebrating Gen. Francis Marion Days!

We begin with

An Evening in the Historic Marion Opera House

January 31st

Documentary & Round Table Discussion

Through donations, the City of Marion has produced a documentary telling the story of Gen. Francis Marion's exploits in what is the present day Marion County area.

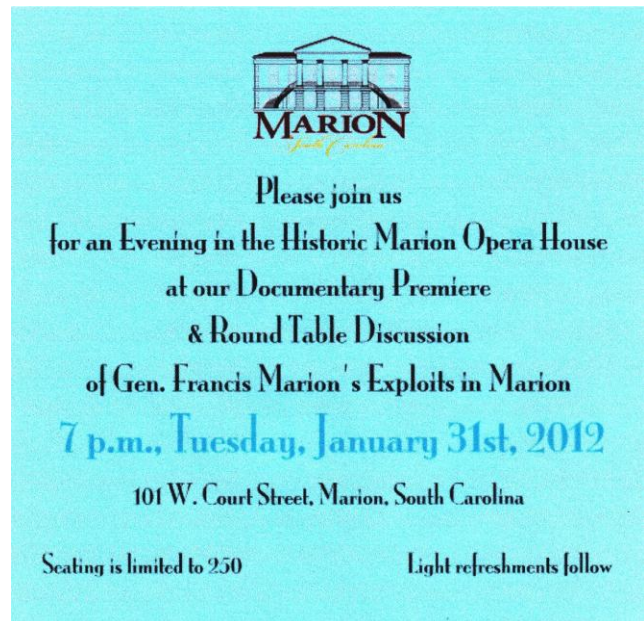
"We undertook the task so we could better show the county's students and residents what they have to be proud of," Mayor Rodney Berry said. "Now, just before our 2nd annual Celebrating Gen. Francis Marion Days, we are going to unveil our documentary and enjoy the discussion of Francis Marion by a group of amateur and professional historians. The public is invited to the free event, but there are only 250 seats."

The viewing is set for 7 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 31 in the historic Marion Opera House.

People may be familiar with PBS's documentary about the American Revolution and the Southern Campaign or SC ETV's "Chasing the Swamp Fox," a documentary about Gen. Marion and his role in the fighting in our state during the American Revolution. And some local people may remember Francis Marion University history professor the late Wayne King who produced in the 1980s a 30-minute documentary about Francis Marion and his entanglements in the Pee Dee," Dianne Owens, city publicist who worked on the project, said. It is in this vein that the City of Marion created the video, she said. The DVD will be made available to the schools in the county first and then orders for more can be made.

"We hope the documentary helps explain the area's strong ties to the story of Gen. Marion and our importance in the battle for independence. We wanted to create something that our students and citizens, and visitors, can see and use when they seek to understand the significance of what occurred here historically," she said.

This is simply another way to help people become educated about their heritage and history and why it is important we remember the efforts of those who served with the Swamp Fox, Owens added.



Berry said he is excited about the unveiling of the documentary and that it will be shown on the Dillon-Marion cable television station, Home Town TV 8, beginning in February. After the showing of the video, it will be viewable “on demand” through Home Town 8's website (www.hometown8.com).

The Evening in the Historic Marion Opera House is a precursor to the Celebrating Gen. Francis Marion Days, set for the last weekend in February, Friday-Sunday, 24-26.

After viewing of the 22-minute video, a panel of amateur and professional historians will make remarks. Marion High School History Teacher Brandi Cook will be moderator of the round table discussion. Discussion is expected to move among such topics as tactics and techniques, families involved in the Revolutionary War, locations of Loyalist & Partisan activities and more.

“We are looking for students, teachers, history lovers, genealogists, and anyone who wants to learn more about Gen. Francis Marion in Marion to join us,” Berry said.

Bob Barrett, Executive Director of the Francis Marion Trail Commission, based at Francis Marion University, will be on hand for the discussion. Panelists include authors and historians Dr. Christine Swager, Jack Parker, Charles Baxley and Britton's Neck Regiment of Militia researcher and re-enactor Dusty Owens.

Swager, a native of Canada who is a descendent of an American who served with the British Army and settled in Canada after the war, and Continental soldiers who fought in Connecticut and Maine, says she grew up knowing that there was a sizable Tory resistance and a bitter civil war during the Revolution.

The retired educator, living in Moore, S.C., at one point lived with her husband and children in Camden, and her interest in the Southern Campaign was rekindled. Those interests led her to write books that help teachers and young people to understand what happened during the Revolution in South Carolina. Her first book, *Black Crows and White Cockades*, is set in Camden and covers the period May 1780 to May 1781. This period includes the time when the British headquarters was located in Camden until the evacuation of the British from that town. The book covers the campaign that Francis Marion, the Swamp Fox, waged against the British.

Parker was born in Pennsylvania and raised in Delaware, but has lived in Virginia, California, Colorado, and South Carolina. He earned a bachelor's degree in education and served four years in the U.S. Navy as an Assistant Navigator aboard the USS Spiegel Grove and as Navigator and Executive Officer aboard the USS Pitkin County.

After leaving the Navy, and taking part in other ventures, he spent five years living aboard a 43 foot yawl, home ported in Charleston, SC. While living in Eutawville, he became interested in visiting Revolutionary War sites and discovered that directions were virtually non-existent. Thus, the idea of Parker's Guide to the Revolutionary War in South Carolina was born. Three and a half years of legwork in the field and a year and a half of writing brought the practical guide to life.

Swager and Parker's books will be for sale after the presentation and available for signings.

Baxley, a general practice lawyer who lives in Lugoff, has practiced law in the firm of Baxley, Pratt & Wells, P.A. for 34 years. Involved in many educational, professional and civic ventures in Kershaw County, he has served as President of the Kershaw County Historical Society and serves on that board. Baxley has served as Judge for the City of Camden, taught business law as Adjunct Professor of Law for Limestone College and American Management College and is a member of the Congaree Land Trust and Southern Revolutionary War Institute's Advisory Boards. He is the editor and publisher of the magazine, Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution, and books on the Southern Campaigns, and gives battlefield tours and military staff rides.

He has organized academic conferences on Revolutionary War topics; an archaeological exploration of the Hobkirk Hill battlefield; a field trip group known as the "Corps of Discovery" to take people to little known Revolutionary War sites in the South; and a Revolutionary War Roundtable for amateurs and professionals to discuss the War in the South.

He is the Chairman of the Battle of Camden Preservation Project Advisory Council and appeared in a PBS documentary on that Revolutionary War battle.

Owens, a Pee Dee native, served in the U.S. Army and the S.C. Army National Guard, retiring as a Major in 2007. He is the Florence County Emergency Management Director and a Revolutionary War researcher and re-enactor. He is writing an historical account of the Britton's Neck Regiment of Militia and the men who made up the regiment from its earliest days through to the American Revolution's end.

Sponsors of the 2011 Celebrating Gen. Francis Marion Days in Marion and donors responsible for the making of the Celebrating Gen. Francis Marion documentary are: Anderson Brothers Bank; Arts Council of Marion County; AWS, Inc; Beneteau; City of Marion; First Citizens; Bob and Sherrie Barrett; Grand Strand Water Sewer Authority; Historic Marion Revitalization Association; Marion Chamber of Commerce; Marion County; Marion Regional Healthcare System; Marion School District 1; Pee Dee Electric; Pee Dee Federal; Progress Energy; Richardson Funeral Home and TD Bank.

Reenactors in the film are affiliated with the Britton's Neck Militia, Marion, S.C., and Col. David Fanning's Regiment-NCLM, N.C. Narrators during the reenactments are Tres Hyman and Darrell Jameson. Conversations about Marion are conducted by Ben Zeigler, Wallace Foxworth and Denley Caughman

Celebrating Gen. Francis Marion Days! in Marion will be the last weekend in February, 24-26 and includes the living history, RunFest and Chili Cook-off!

Each year, Marion remembers its namesake with several events, including a somber wreath-laying ceremony, and livelier living history demonstrations and reenactments, a RunFest and the 3rd annual Swamp Fox Chili Cook-off.

Several Marion groups have collaborated to organize the events that celebrate and remember Gen. Francis Marion and the unique role he and his men played in the American Revolution. In April 2007, the S.C. General Assembly passed a bill designating

Feb. 27 of each year as General Francis Marion Memorial Day. The date marks the anniversary of Gen. Marion's date of death. He was 63 when he died in 1795.

Area third grade students and eighth graders attend the Memorial Service, held at the foot of the Gen. Francis Marion statue on Main Street. This year that event will be on Friday, Feb. 24 at 9:15 a.m.

In addition to the wreath-laying, other activities will include:

Friday, Feb. 24:

5-7:30 p.m. Patriot and Loyalists Reenactors begin setting up camps on Godbold Street. Enjoy "Fireside Chats" with reenactors while they set up camp, Hot Cider & Gingerbread. Come learn about the hobby of reenacting and the history portrayed.

Saturday, Feb. 25:

Beginning at 9:30 a.m.: 10-mile Swamp Fox Challenge; 10-K Swamp Fox Dash, 5K, Children's 100-Yard Dash & 1-mile Fun Run ... REGISTER online at http://www.racesonline.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.race_detail&race_id=11478

9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.: Living History Reenactors, Demonstrators & Exhibitors (including a spinning and tomb stone carving demonstration, candle making and soap making; on the grounds of the Marion County Library; Camps open to the public.

Noon: Swamp Fox Chili Cook off taste-testing begins; REGISTER online at www.swampfoxchilicookoff.com

Sunday, Feb. 26

9:30 a.m.: 18th Century Worship service, Marion Presbyterian Church, Main Street

11 a.m. - 3 p.m.: Demonstrators & Exhibitors on the grounds of the Marion County Library; Camps open to the public.

Events and schedules will be posted online on the city's website at www.marionsc.gov and at www.theswampfox.com

Questions? Call Rodney at 843-423-8235; Judy at the Chamber at 843-423-3561; or Dianne at 843-423-5961, Ext. 21.